

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO AMEMBASSY MADRID

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2594

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 10284

LIMDIS

MADRID FOR AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UK, SP

SUBJECT: CONSERVATIVE PARTY INTEREST IN SPANISH DEVELOP-
MENTS AND SPAIN-NATO RELATIONSHIP

1. PETER WALKER, FORMER CONSERVATIVE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY AND OPPOSITION DEFENSE SPOKESMAN, WILL PAY SHORT VISIT TO MADRID JULY 8-9. HE IS MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIS TRIP THROUGH SPANISH AMBASSADOR FRAGA AND NOT THROUGH FCO. WALKER ASKED EMBASSY OFFICER TO KEEP THIS INFORMATION "CONFIDENTIAL."

2. IN ADDITION TO MEETING VARIOUS MEMBERS OF SPANISH CABINET WHICH FRAGA IS ARRANGING, WALKER HOPES TO CALL ON UK AMBASSADOR WIGGIN, WHO IS CLOSE FRIEND OF EDWARD HEATH, FORMER LEADER OF CONSERVATIVE PARTY. HE EXPECTS TO CONTACT WIGGIN BY PHONE AFTER ARRIVING IN MADRID AND SEE HIM, IF SCHEDULE PERMITS.

3. EMBASSY OFFICER SUGGESTED THAT WALKER ALSO FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US AMBASSADOR IF HE HAS TIME, AND WALKER REQUESTED EMBASSY OFFICER TO ALERT US EMBASSY MADRID.

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4. WALKER EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT "THE WEST," I.E. UK AND US, SHOULD TAKE ACTION NOW TO BRING SPAIN INTO MUCH CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO PRIOR TO FRANCO'S DEPARTURE FROM THE SCENE. PURPOSE OF HIS TRIP, THEREFORE, IS TO DEVELOP A FEEL FOR CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN SPAIN, A KNOWLEDGE OF THE CAST OF PLAYERS, AND SEE WHAT MIGHT BE DONE. UPON RETURN, WALKER WILL BRIEF CONSERVATIVE LEADER MARGARET THATCHER AND ATTEMPT TO STIMULATE RENEWED CONSERVATIVE POLICY ON SPAIN.

5. SPAIN IS A DIFFICULT PROBLEM FOR LABOR GOVERNMENT, WALKER SAID, SINCE LABOR LEFT WOULD IMMEDIATELY REACT VOCIFEROUSLY IF CALLAGHAN ATTEMPTED IMPROVE SPANISH RELATIONSHIP TO NATO OR UK-SPANISH BILATERAL RELATIONS. WALKER SAID, HOWEVER, HE SUSPECTS CALLAGHAN HAS NONETHELESS A REALISTIC VIEW ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SPAIN AND MIGHT MODERATE HIS POSITION SOMEWHAT EVEN BEFORE FRANCO GOES.

RICHARDSON

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